

ABSTRACT

The invention provides a computerized electronic auction payment system and method for effecting a real-time payment for an item won in an electronic auction by setting up and maintaining electronic auction payment accounts for prospective bidders and sellers.

5 The prospective bidders provide funds to their electronic auction payment accounts maintained by the computerized electronic auction payment system, prior to being deemed as winning bidders, via direct deposit, using a credit card, or sending a check, money order, or other financial document to an operator of the computerized electronic auction payment system. In one embodiment, upon being deemed as a winning bidder, the winning bidder accesses a payment page, enters the total amount of funds to be transferred to the seller, and authorizes the computerized electronic auction payment system to effect a real-time payment by debiting his, i.e., the winning bidder's, respective electronic auction payment account and crediting the electronic auction payment account of the seller, and/or another account specified by the seller. In an alternate embodiment, the prospective bidder authorizes the

10 computerized electronic auction payment system to effect a real-time payment to the seller upon the prospective bidder being deemed the winning bidder (i.e., immediately following the conclusion of the auction). That is, without the winning bidder having to access the payment page.

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